

SENSIBILITY
IN
ENGLISH LYRIC POETRY, CIRCO 1750-1830.

by
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PREFACE

My interpretation of sensibility as expressed in this thesis is based upon the books listed in the bibliography. I find it a difficult matter to fix the limits of such a movement and altho my subject covers only a short period, I have tried to trace the signs of sensibility before and after this period. Sensibility in English literature is by no means independent of that of European countries, but since my knowledge of European literature is limited, and since my subject is lengthy enough as it stands, I have made few references to foreign writings. Several other English writers might well have been included in this discussion but I could not obtain their works.

My thanks are due to Professor S. L. Whitcomb, who has sympathetically directed me in this work.

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CHAPTER I

NATURE OF SENSIBILITY

Sensibility is that disposition of a personality which indicates that the feelings have the ascendancy over the reason. Thru the influence of sensations, the mind tends to be out of its equilibrium either in an excess of joy or in an excess of sadness. As to the importance of sensations philosophers have differed and still differ. There are two extreme views: the one, that the mind has no knowledge except what it has gained thru the senses; the other, that the mind has abstract ideas that are independent of the senses. Philosophers before the time of Socrates were rather scientists than real philosophers. The Greek philosophers, such as Protagoras and the Sophists were sensualists and were somewhat materialistic. They sought knowledge from the material world, yet took the human understanding as an important factor. Socrates took a step that was surprising to his contemporaries, when he affirmed that nothing in the physical world could be known with certainty and the only subject for definite knowledge was one's self. Another idea was added to philosophy by Socrates in regard to ethics. He declared that goodness, right and truth were essential to philosophy. This statement was not readily

accepted by other thinkers and has formed a question for argument even to the present day. Sceptics and atheists have declared that there are conflicts between science and religion and without doubt there have been bitter contentions between dogmas and theology but never has there been a lack of agreement between true religion and true philosophy. Time has proven that the sensualist is not a true thinker or believer; he is vulgar and narrow minded. Sensibility is a lack of the vision of the truth. Socrates says that no one is voluntarily bad but that evil is the result of ignorance. A person who looks only with his physical eye and does not use his mind's eye does not see very far. If an evil person really understood the results of his misdeeds he would never commit them. This teaching has never been believed widely and Shelley, who has imbued his poetry with it, has been criticized severely for expounding such a theory. The more a man uses his mind and the more he knows the better he will act. Instead of saying that a person did a thing for meanness it would be nearer the truth to say that he did it because of his ignorance - his ignorance of the higher mental life. Socrates was the first great teacher of these truths and he lived according to what he taught. He made the statement that a person could

not teach a truth unless he lived it. He strove to educate people to live above their senses. Altho he had a few faithful followers the mass of people continued to believe that life consisted principally in the physical being.

Kant was the next great champion against the tyranny of the senses. Kant's writings fall into two definite groups: the first is dogmatic and in harmony with his teachers; the second contains many contradiction to the first but his thots are more original and the influence of his teachers is thrown off. He considers sensibility as sensible ideas - ideas produced by material gained thru the senses- as distinct from the understanding which uses them. He proves that we cannot gain the truth thru the senses. Arithmetic is the science of duration and Geometry is the science of space. The truths in these sciences are absolute necessity. They are not the result of experience because experience does not cover a sufficiently large number of tests. Experience does not teach that the three angles of a triangle equal two right angles but this axiom must be the product of reason. Since these truths are concerned with time and space, time and space are 'a priori' intuitions. Every thing we consider in the material world we conceive in time and space and out of these relationships we know nothing of the world. "Hence, if sensibility, in consequence of an instinctive and inevitable habit, shows us things

in time and space, it does not show them as they are in themselves, but as they appear to it thru its spectacles, one of whose glasses is called time ; the other, space."

G. H. Lewes, in his book, "Problems of Life and Mind", discusses the place of sentiment in philosophy. He censures the scientist for entirely overlooking the element of sentiment and says the final test of philosophical thinking is feeling. He evidently uses feeling here as meaning intuitive sense. "In spite of plain argument, in the positive we may fail to believe a fact because we feel it is wrong." Feeling persuades us to seek the argument which will prove what we want to be true and reject its opposite. Altho idealists would forget the senses and notice only the mind, as long as man is human he can hardly go that far because he will continually be confronted by his feelings. James Mill in "The Human Mind" says, " Our fellow creatures are the origin of affections of the greatest influence in human life. The idea of man includes the love of his pleasures, hatred of his pains."

The wonderful development of science during the last half century is proving the fact that the natural or ideal position of mind in the universe is to be master of all things. The relationship between sensations and reason

varies in different persons and also varies in the same person at different stages of his development. Thus the two views of philosophers may both be right if they refer to separate periods. The mind is dependent upon sensations or is even controlled by them until it has gained the mastery and won its perfect independence. This process is a long, slow, growth- the development of a life even beyond the physical life. The widely varying views of the different philosophers are caused by the fact^{that} some philosophers have fixed their attention upon one particular point in the process and have taken that for the ultimate. The growth of a child is typical of the growth of mankind. At first the child has only physical needs; he cares simply for food and clothing, but as he comes to mature life his desires are more complex and he has mental desires that do not concern the body. Thus mankind is growing away from the senses and becoming more concerned with the mental.

The study of sensibility does not deal with those advanced stages of development in which the mental powers have ^{ed} subject, the physical but with those primitive conditions in which the mind is a tool for the senses. The sentimentalists have erred in thinking that greater perfection can be attained by cultivating excessive feelings. Their feel-

ings were their Gods. To the sentimentalist the enthronement of reason over sensations was the act of an atheist. Lawrence Sterne says: " Dear Sensibility! source inexhausted of all that's precious in our joys, or costly in our sorrows! thou chainest thy martyr upon his bed of straw and 'tis thou who lift'st up to heaven." Sterne is carried away to such an extent by his feelings that he does not waste his energy on such insignificant things as proper grammar and punctuation.

These men of too highly cultivated feelings never discovered the interesting fact that the mind can control the impressions which it receives. Ignorant of their mental capacity, they received any sensation within reach and gave it free license in the undiscovered regions of their minds, letting it become master instead of keeping it in its proper position of servant.

Two adjectives , sensual and sensu^usous, have been derived from the noun "sense" , the former describing a base character, the latter , a moderately good one. A sensual man is one who is given to the inordinate indulgence of his animal appetite. He is a man who has made the wrong use of his senses. A sensuous person is one who has a warm appreciation for the beautiful and is keenly alive to sense-

affecting influences. He uses his senses as tools and keeps the mastery over them.

One element of sensibility is fear. This is caused by a dread of surprise, a lack of confidence in life. The sentimental person knows that he will be turned in a different direction by every new circumstance that arises around himself because he is a victim of his senses. He is superstitious; he thinks that the great powers and forces of the world, which are invisible to him, act according to their whims and not according to a fixed law. Henry Kirke White, in his poem on "Despair," says,

" 'Tis him I sing- Despair- terrific name,
Striking unsteadily the tremulous chord
Of timorous terror- discord in the sound."

The idea of death holds a prominent place in the mind of a sensuous person. He usually conceives a future life but it is something so strange and remote from himself that at the death of a dear friend he collapses and spends the rest of his days mourning. He imagines that his sorrow is caused by his great love for his friend, but in reality it is caused by his own weakness, by his lack of confidence in his creator and his fear of the life to come. In St. Pierre's novel, "Paul and Virginia," both the families of

Paul and Virginia grieved themselves to death because of the death of Virginia, and even the servants soon followed their mistresses to the grave.

In sensual love affairs the lover is represented as seeking and winning his friend thru immense difficulties. He is certain that there is but one person in this wide world with whom he will be in love and that he will recognize her at first sight or at least after a short acquaintance. After the honey-moon, to his surprise, he discovers that the mysterious power which he believed had found his friend for him, was merely his own superstition, and his wife no more desirable than a great many other girls whom he had seen. The variation in his attitude of mind changed the appearance of his wife as completely as Coleridge's fair Geraldine changed her form. But since he is a sensualist he does not know that love must have an intellectual basis and is not simply the indulgence of the pleasures of the senses.

The sentimentalist keeps his sympathy and forgiveness extended at arm's length for any one who asks for it; and the asking is all that is required. He does not believe that a person must win his own forgiveness thru a change of actions; he will shed tears over hollow words of apology. Appearance is all that he perceives. He cannot understand

that he would be showing greater sympathy to hold his position firmly and make the petitioner come up to a higher standard than to say that because he is begging me and is my friend I will come down to his. Even M. G. Lewis' rigid monk was too free with his sympathy. The disguised maiden, exaggerating her sorrows, appealed to the monk for his attention. After much hesitation he gave it to her altho he had to take a step downward to do it. By persistent entreaties she led him on , step by step, until he even committed^t murders. Undue sympathy comes at a high price.

A man gives himself to excessive joy or sorrow because he thinks they are permanent. While in these states he does not imagine that he will ever be otherwise. He is too narrow-minded to look into the future and perceive that they will not last; or to know that the natural and permanent disposition of the mind is on medium ground.

To define sensibility negatively, it is what Socrates did not have. Neither friends, public opinion or even the weather affected him; he lived in his mind. Sensibility is what Emerson did not commend when he spoke concerning one not being free with his sympathy, "But so may you give these friends pain. Yes, but I cannot sell my liberty and my

power to save their sensibility. ----- Our sympathy is just as base. We come to them who weep foolishly and sit down and cry for company, instead of imparting to them truth and health in rough electric shocks, putting them once more in communication with their reason." Emerson, more than any writer, unless it is Browning, has put the abstract ideas of philosophers into concrete expressions so that common people can understand them and make use of them in practical life.

The qualities of sensibility can be felt better than spoken.

CHAPTER II

THE RISE OF SENTIMENTALISM

It is hardly proper to speak of the origin of literary movements since they do not begin at one particular time or place, nor cease to exist when they no longer hold the chief place in literary style. Thru different channels, from where one can scarcely tell, they grow unobserved until at some unexpected moment they are found to be in full bloom. The writer who has produced a striking work at this time, is at first considered as the originator of the movement but after the critics of the following ages have turned their microscopes upon him he is stripped of some of his honor and compelled to divide it with his less important predecessors. For many years Steele was considered as the originator of the sentimental movement in English literature. Critics of later years have discovered that Steele did not have originality enough to begin anything but was rather a man who would follow the fashion and strive to produce the popular thing.*

The signs of sensibility first began to be evident in the Restoration drama, such as those of Otway and Southerne.

*See D.C. Croissant's Studies in the Works of Colley Cibber.

The mass of people at first delighted in the immorality of the drama of that period but by the close of the century they had had a sufficiency and their voice of indignation against it was sharply expressed in Jeremy Collier's Short View of the Profaneness and Immorality of the English Stage. The moral reform that took place at the beginning of the eighteenth century augmented sentimentality. On the part of the dramatists the reform was artificial, with the exception of Addison; or perhaps it would be better to class Addison's dramas as dramatic sermons rather than as plays. The play writers preferred the Restoration style but they had to meet the popular demand and they complained because they must use the severity of style required by Collier. Vices which had been promenaded upon the stage in all their brilliancy now had their exeunt and artificial virtues had their entrances. Real virtues could not be produced in so short a time as was demanded so shams were substituted for them. The apparently good characters were overpraised because of their wonderful goodness and were wept over because they were made to suffer, notwithstanding their virtues, from the cruel circumstances which fate had thrust upon them. Thus the public were satisfied in having the accusation of vices turned from themselves and cast upon fate; and as fate made

no audible objections the reformed drama continued to be produced unmolested. These writers considered weakness as a quality for a good character and strength for an evil one. They sought to reform people by the stage and produced characters of admirable actions without sincerity of purpose behind them. They did not have true motives; hence their actions were mechanical. They had no originality or initiative.

Sentimentality is considered as the connecting link between comedy and tragedy. In order to make the appeal for sympathy stronger they would make the suffering greater and thus produce a tragic situation. Among the early sensuous dramas, Steele's "The Conscious Lovers" (1722) attracted the most attention and regardless of the satires such as Gay's "The Beggar's Opera", (1728) and Fielding's "Tom Thumb the Great" (1730), dramas of this same style continued to be produced during the Garrick Era (1717-1779).

The novel was the leading form of literature during the eighteenth century. Swift had followed the formal style of Pope but the sympathetic appeal of Cibber and Steele soon found its way into the novels of Richardson * and Fielding*.

* Pamela 1740.

*Joseph Andrews 1742.

Sterne in "Tristram Shandy" (1759-1767) surpassed all his contemporaries^{or} in portraying emotional characters. He produced tears in torrents and enjoyed them. The sentimental novel was produced most extensively during the latter part of the eighteenth century. The sensuous drama was the result of the moral reform required of the Restoration stage; in sympathy with this reform the tear-flooded novel was a reaction against the classicism, coldness and selfcontentedness of the Augustan Age.

In lyric poetry sensibility became evident about the same time as in the novel and for the same reasons. Thomson, the classical in style was romantic and sentimental in thot. In his poem, "Winter" (1726) he turned his attention to nature which had been neglected since the time of Spenser. His subject was romantic and different from the preceding age. It was a surprise to the people of this period that insignificant things in nature could be treated successfully in literature. The poem, "Winter" was a forerunner of sentimentalism in that it appealed to mankind for sympathy toward nature. This phase of sensibility was developed more fully in Burns and Wordsworth.

The poets commonly known as the graveyard school cultivated the feeling of melancholy, mixed with the grotesque and the mysterious. They dwelt upon death and

the grave so much that they overemphasized weakness and fear in man. Thruout the sentimental movement melancholy and sorrow were more common than excessive joy.

Robert Blair in "The Grave" said:

"When self- esteem, or other's adulation,
Would cunningly persuade us we are something
Above the common level of our kind;
The grave gainsays the smooth-complectioned flattery,
And with blunt truth acquaints us what we are."

The grave- loving poets were always in bad luck. It is said of William Shenstone, "Poor man! he was always wishing for money, for fame, or other distinction." He ruined his health pining for things which he never obtained.

In seventeen hundred and twenty one Mark Akenside published his poem, "Pleasures of the Imagination". His spirits are not so low as his contemporaries. He recognized the harassing evils of the world, but considered that man would be equal to the strife if he exercised sufficient energy. This poem contains elaborate descriptions of nature. We do not find many practical men of affairs in the sentimental school but Thomas Warton is an exception. He was connected with Trinity College forty seven years, ten years as a professor of poetry. He has a few touches of humor but the main character of his poetry is sad. In

the "Pleasures of Melancholy" (1745) he says,

"Few know the elegance of soul refined,
Whose soft sensation feels a quicker joy
From melancholy scenes, than the dull pride
Of tasteless splendor and magnificence
Can e'er afford.

What are the splendors of the gaudy court,
Its tinsel trappings, and its pagent pomps?
To me far happier seems the banished lord,
Amid Siberia's unrejoicing wilds

Who pines all lonesome, in the chambers hoar."

This poem shows the characteristic mood of the grave-yard school.

The hymns of John and Charles Wesley (1748) are still found in the Methodist Hymnal in great numbers. The majority of these songs have a spirit of rejoicing; the melancholy air is gone. Many expressions, having been taken from the Bible out of their natural surroundings and placed in a different ^Arythm, sound artificial. However, forms of religion are necessarily more or less artificial and people have been delighted to sing these songs for a century and a half because they find their own religious feelings expressed there. The songs of the Wesleys are still popular.

Gray was one of the earliest poets, who gave evidence of romanticism. He also has the sorrowful dissatisfied air of the sentimentalist. His manner of living was similar to Cowper's- he did not wish to appear in public and lived the life of a recluse. Gray's poetry has come down to us as the most popular of his time. The main reason why Gray is still read, is that he treats nature in the romantic style. He is especially sensible to beautiful scenes. They are charming to him because of what they represent to the lover of nature. He said that the scenery of the Alps was so beautiful that you could easily imagine fairies there at noonday. Modern poets still treat nature in a manner similar to Gray's. Gray has attractive scenes in his "Elegy Written in a Country Church-yard". Gray's disposition was not so cheerful as the Wesley brothers'; neither is he so contented with life. His sadness is sometimes tinged with pessimism and a resentment against the rich and fortunate, as in his "Ode on Spring" when he says,

"How vain the ardour of the crowd,
How low, how little are the Proud,
How indigent the great!"

A similar thought is found in the "Ode on the Pleasures Arising from Vicissitude." He shows how nature and animals rejoice in the change that comes upon them but man still retains the memory of his misfortunes in seasons of pleas-

ure.

" 'Tis man alone that joy descries
With forward and reverted eyes.
Smiles on past misfortunes' brow
Soft reflection's hand can trace,
And o'er the cheek of sorrow throw
A melancholy grace."

Gray took great pleasure in writing epitaphs or sonnets on the death of friends because these subjects allowed him to dwell upon his favorite themes of death, sorrow and the grave.

"The Reliques of Ancient Poetry" (1765), by Bishop Percy, "Fingal" (1762) by Macpherson and the scattered poems (1752-1770) by Thomas Chatterton, all supposed to have been written by ancient poets, served as incentives and examples for the lyric poets that followed. They were wild and primitive enough in their war songs to deceive the public into thinking that they were ancient.

The lyric took a more prominent place in literature during the remainder of the century than it had during the first quarter. Sonnets became common about seventeen hundred and fifty.

The sentimental movement was not confined to England

alone. Scotland, which can scarcely be considered as having a literature separate from England, responded to the emotional impulses of the eighteenth century altho she produced no great writers. Mackenzie wrote "The Man of Feeling" (1771). The man of feeling is so sensitive that when he visits an insane asylum, his grief for the inmates overcomes him and he can scarcely leave the place. He passes his old school house, which he has not seen for many years and the recollection of the happy events of his life which are past and gone give rise to another spell of weeping.

German literature followed the lead of the French and English. Johann Wolfgang Goethe was sentimental in his younger days and had many love affairs which resulted unsatisfactorily to both parties concerned. At the age of twenty he was despondent; he had fallen in love with his friend's betrothed and did the only honorable thing for him to do- separate himself entirely from her. As a result of this affair and in harmony with the spirit of his age, he wrote "The Sorrows of Werther" (1774), the first and most striking production of its kind in Germany. But Goethe was too strong a writer to succumb to this mannerism long. In "Faust" he had overcome sentimentality and showed himself the master of a style of his own.

The showers of tears extended even to Russia. Mikolai Mikharlovitch Karamzin produced "Poor Liza" (1792). He had travelled abroad in seventeen hundred and eighty nine and easily fell under the influence of Sterne. The speaker in the story says, "I love those objects that touch my heart and cause me to shed tears of tender sorrow."

In France, Rousseau was the forerunner of emotionalism. In seventeen hundred and eighty five this movement had risen to a great height in Bernardin De St. Pierre. His "Paul and Virginia" contains sentimentalism in the two extreme conditions of human feelings. The members of the two families are cast from the most sublime happiness and love to the most cruel sorrow. The life of the French is more emotional than that of the English or Germans. Sentimentalism took a wider field in France than in the other countries and crept into some of her best writings. Victor Hugo who has made all his readers love his wonderful character, Jean Valjean, is classed as a sentimentalist; but he has not let it predominate in his style.

Thus the leading nations of Europe are seen to have a connected literary spirit altho the movements do not exist at the same time in the different countries.

CHAPTER III

COWPER AND MINOR LYRISTS

The year of Dr. Johnson's death was marked by the publication of "The Task" by William Cowper (1731-1800). In the chaff of "The Task", which is Cowper's most important production, a few gold nuggets are found. Cowper's life presents a more interesting study of sensibility than his writings. The sentimental character in real life has not been studied so carefully as that in literature, because if the student turns his attention upon the mental state of another, he can only judge of the emotions of his subject by his actions or expressions, which are sometimes quite remote from the facts of the case. If the student examines the sensations in his own mind, the turning of the mind upon itself tends to destroy the emotion. Cowper gave us the inner view of his life more fully in his letters than in his poetry. He seemed to have a superabundance of nerves. He gave up his position as clerk of the court on account of his embarrassment when appearing in public. The extent to which he loved solitude and hated the confusion of the city is shown by the fact that he lived sixty miles from London twenty eight years and never visited it. In "The Task" he says,

"Oh for a lodge in some vast wilderness,
Some boundless contiguity of shade
Where rumor of oppression and deceit,
Of unsuccessful or successful war
Might never reach me more!"

Cowper spent many quiet hours with his friend and benefactor, Mrs. Unwin. They did not engage in the accustomed amusements of the village, but turned their attention to religion. In company with their pastor, Mr. Newton, they had divine services at eleven and three o'clock and spent the remainder of the morning reading- usually the Scriptures. In the afternoon they walked in the garden discussing religious questions. Like several other sentimental writers, his mind was weak. From seventeen hundred and seventy three until seventy seven he was intellectually deranged. His deep melancholy was caused, not by too much religion, as is commonly said, but by too much religious formality. But in his greatest despair he did not entirely lose confidence in God. He said, "For though others have suffered desertion, yet few, I believe, for so long a time, and perhaps none a desertion accompanied with such experiences".

Cowper expresses sympathy for flowers and insects similarly to Burns:

"I would not enter on my list of friends
(Though graced with polished manners and fine sense,
Yet wanting sensibility) the man
Who needlessly sets foot upon a worm.
An inadvertant step may crush a snail
That crawls at evening in the public path;
He that has humanity, forwarned
Will tread aside and let the reptile live."

He realized that he was a slave to his senses and was chaffed under his burden when he said,

"'Twere better to^{be} born a stone,
Of rude shape and feeling none,
Than with a tenderness like mine
And sensibilities so fine!"

There are several minor lyrists which are contemporary with Cowper. William Blake (1757-1827) was the forerunner of Shelley. He lived more in the world of imagination and spirits than in the material world. In praising his own poems he said, "I may praise it since I do not pretend to be any other than the secretary- the authors are in eternity." He wrote extensively but could get no one to read his productions. The following lines from "Tirzah" expressed his resentment at having his soul bound down by a body.

"Thou mother of my mortal part
With cruelty didst mould my Heart,
And with false self-deceiving tears
Didst bind my Nostrils, Eyes and Ears.
Didst close my Tongue in senseless clay,
And me to mortal life betray.
The death of Jesus set me free
Then what have I to do with thee?"

Blake, being an engraver, was particularly sensible to beauty and symmetry of contour. When a boy he wished that he might have as fine a head as Goldsmith. In "The Tiger" he praises the appearance of the tiger:

"Tiger, Tiger burning bright
In the forest of the night,
What immortal hand or eye
Could frame thy fearful symmetry."

His poems are considered mystical and some of them are not clear; but his conception of the infinite is remarkable. In his poem "Auguries of Innocence" he develops the idea that if you know any one thing perfectly you know all things:

"To see a world in a grain of sand,
And a heaven in a wild flower;
Hold infinity in the palm of your hand,

And eternty in an hour."

Blake had considerable sympathy for birds and animals and considered it a sin to molest them, as is shown in the same poem as the above.

"He who shall hurt the little wren
Shall never be beloved by men;
He who the ox to wrath has moved
Shall never be by woman loved."

His most familiar friends were spirits; when dying his face showed ^{ne} as if he were looking into the other world.

Samuel Rogers (1763-1855), a London banker, began to write for the Gentlemen's Magazine under the title of The Scribler, when he was only eighteen years of age. One of his characteristic weaknesses was his exaggeration of small things. A tear is not too small a subject for him:

"The little brilliant ere it fell,
Its luster caught from Chloe's eye;
Then trembling left its coral cell-
The spring of Sensibility."

Rogers was affectionate and a true friend; he brightened the last hours of Sheridan's life by his generosity. Guests were always welcome at his home and were well entertained. At the age of thirty he retired from his active work in the bank and devoted himself to literature and to friends. Such

men as Scott, Byron, Moore, Crabbe, Campbell, Fox, Channing and Erskine spent many enjoyable evenings with him. He describes his feeling for a pleasant home in his song, "A Wish",

"Mine be a cot beside the hill;
A bee-hive's hum shall soothe my ear;
A willow brook, that turns a mill,
With many a fall shall linger near.
The swallow, oft, beneath my thatch,
Shall twitter from her clay-built nest;
Oft shall the pilgrim lift the latch,
And share my meal, a welcome guest."

Rogers had bravely overcome the timidity which he possessed, when, as a boy, he called to see Dr. Johnson and after ringing the bell ran away before the doctor could appear. His sensibility is most keen in regard to the past. In "The Pleasures of Memory" (1792), he describes his visit to a house familiar to him in former days. Every old picture and dusty chair recalls the past, the sacred idol of the sentimentalists

"As o'er the dusky furniture I bend,
Each chair awakes the feeling of a friend.
The storied arras, source of fond delight,
With old achievement charms the wildered sight.

Hail, Memory, hail! in thy exhaustless mine
From age to age unnumbered treasures shine."

His Italy (1822) shows his sensitive nature and is one of the best known of his productions.

Robert Bloomfield (1766-1823) was another nature poet. He had poor health and was lacking in money all his life, his father having died when he was a child. He did not know what it was to have enough to eat and when he received any thing he usually shared it with his poor relatives. His poem, "The Farmer's Boy" (1800) became so popular that twenty six thousand copies were sold in three years. His poetry like his life was meagre and concerned with only the most simple things in nature as he confessed himself,

"No Alpine wonders thunder through my verse
The roaring cataract, the snow-topt hill,
Inspiring awe, till breath itself stands still.
Nature's sublimer scenes ne'er charmed my eyes,
From meaner objects far my raptures flow."

He had rest and happiness only in his imagination. In his sympathetic description of the soldier's return home one can see his own longing for such a pleasure:

"Come hither, Nancy, kiss me once again.
This is your uncle Charles come home from Spain.
The child approached and with her fingers light,
Stroked my old eyes, almost deprived of sight.

Happy old Soldier! what's the world to me!"

Mrs. Ann Radcliffe wrote some lyric poetry altho she is best known as a novelist. In her novel, "The Mysteries of Udolpho" (1794), the sentimental, romantic and Gothic elements are all strong and thoroughly mixed. She will make a character weep over the beauty of scenery. The following verse from her ode "To the Nightingale" expresses her thot.

"Child of the melancholy song!

O yet that tender strain prolong!

Yet o'er the long-regretted scene

Thy song the grace of sorrow throws;

A melancholy charm serene

More rare than all that mirth bestows."

Henry Kirke White (1785-1806) was a precocious child; he would leave his play with other children to listen to stories. This lover of night and solitude did most of his writing while other people were sleeping. He was nervous and had poor health but was an enthusiastic christian and was bright and studious. His melancholy strain of mind is seen even in his subjects - "Lines by a Lover at the Grave of his Mistress", "Written in Prospect of Death", "The Eve of Death", "To Midnight", Lines Written in Wilford

Churchyard" and "The Lullaby of a convict to her child the night before execution." His bodily condition affected his poetry; he is always under (under) a severe nervous strain, longing for rest. The only comfort he seems to be able to find is in the quietness of the night as he expressed in his poem, "To Midnight",

"Season of general rest, whose solemn still
Strikes to the trembling heart a fearful chill,
But speakes to philosophic souls delight,
My candle waning melancholy by,
I sit and taste the holy calm of night."

His early death is thot to have been caused by over work. Such sentimentalists as White have our synpathy rather than our admiration.

George Crabbe (1754-1832) stands between the two centuries, belonging to the classical school in his form and tending toward the realist^{ic} in his subject matter. His early life was spent under the influence of Dr. Johnson; in his later life he formed the acquaintance of Byron, Scott and Campbell. Since humor is a destroying element to sensibility it would almost be a contradiction to say that a sentimentalist has it; yet Crabbe has a slight sense of humor. When a young man, he left his native village to try his fortune in London. After meeting with

misfortunes he wrote back to his friends, "It's the vilest thing in the world to have but one coat. My only one has happened with a mischance."

In Crabbe is found a strain of Dickens' humanitarianism. In his poem "The Village Poor" he expresses his sympathy for the poor sick:

"A potent quack, long vers'd in human ills
Who first insults the victim whom he kills,
Whose murtherous hand a drowsy bench protect,
And whose most tender mercy is neglect."

"There, where the putrid vapors flagging play,
And the dull wheel hums doleful through the day;
There children dwell who know no parents care,
Parents, who know (know) no children's love, dwell
there".

He does not have strong faith in life; the only hope he presents to the working class is death and he considers this rather as a relief than a reward. In "The Hall of Justice" the vagrant is one of those sentimentally good characters who is more than willing to suffer for a sin which she explains she was compelled to commit. The vagrant steals bread for her orphan child. After he has appealed to the reader's sympathy until he has justified her in the act, she asks God to prepare a better lot for

the child and to punish herself whom it would be sin to save.

William Lisle Bowles (1762-1850) was a pupil of Joseph Warton and has the same spirit of melancholy in his poetry as his master. His teacher recognized his poetical ability and encouraged him. Bowles criticized Pope's coldness and lack of heart and considered his subject matter artificial. Other writers took up the question and heated articles were written on both sides. In these prose discussions Bowles shows a pugnacious and irritable temper; he can scarcely be recognized as the same man as the writer of his mild sentimental poems. Altho he was an industrious, hard working curate, yet every year in his later life he added new poems to his list. He was quite popular; his sonnets published in seventeen hundred and eighty nine reached their ninth edition by eighteen hundred and five. His poems, entitled "The Villager's Verse-book", were religious exhortations. His wife taught them to the children of his vicarage. His sympathy for the working class is similar to Crabbe's but he is able to see that there is some pleasure in labor. The following verse is taken from 'The Old Labourer'.

"Let worldlings waste their time and health,
And try each vain delight;
They cannot buy with all their wealth,
The labourer's rest at night."

His verse sounds artificial; he speaks of the most serious things in religious life with little feeling. This is a common fault of sentimentalists- they think that they can produce the same effect that they have heard others produce, merely by using the same words that they have heard and without having sincerity behind it; but in some mysterious way, words will betray a speaker if he is not in earnest. It takes considerable sincerity of purpose to use expressions, which have been taken from the Bible, and not have them sound artificial, especially in poetry. An example of this is found in "The Mower",

"The flowers of life may bloom and fade,
But he in whom I trust,
Though cold and in my grave- clothes laid
Can raise me from the dust."

Bowles has a tender feeling for animals. In "The Shepherd and His Dog", he gives a touching picture of a shepherd and his dog who are both growing old. He represents the dog as saying to his master,

"Though solitude around is spread,
Master, alone thou shalt not be;
And when the turf is on thy head,
I only shalt remember thee!"

CHAPTER IV

BURNS AND WORDSWORTH

Robert Burns (1759-1796) lived during the period when sentimentalism was at its height and yet like Goethe he was too great a man to become a mere tool of his time. Altho he was sentimental, he also had other characteristics; he was changeableness itself. One hour he would sing in a care free manner,

"Mair spier na, nor fear na,
Auld age ne'er mind a feg;
Tha last o't, tha warst o't,
Is only but to beg."

and the next hour he would seriously declare, "Man was made to mourn."

Burns was quite sincere in his emotions or at least considerably more so than Sterne; Burns was never caught peeping out from behind the folds of his handkerchief to see what effect his tears would have. Burns had high ideals, but could not live up to them and his failures threw him into melancholy moods. A great amount of sympathy has been wasted on Burns. If he had wanted to be different from what he was very badly he would have made himself, at least, some different. Regardless of all his misfortunes the

majority of his poems are written in a bold confidential style but at the same time an undercurrent of discontent can be perceived. Burns made the poor man the hero of his writings and yet he fretted under his poverty. Burns' worst trouble was his weakness of will power. Like the most of human beings he thought that some external force was the cause of all his mistakes. He would lay the blame upon the Devil if he could find no one else. He laid bare the faults of others, especially hypocrisy, in cutting satire. In "Twa Dogs" he shows a striking contrast between the rich man, who to Burns was necessarily artificial and indolent, and the poor man, who was necessarily honest and industrious. In his "Address to the Unco Guid" and in his description of a church fair he satirizes the hypocrite and religious formality.

Burns was imaginative; he made bridges talk and understood the languages of mice, lice, dogs, hares, goats, roses and daisies. He is romantic in his treatment of nature and realistic in his choice of subjects. Wholesome humor is found in "Tam o' Shanter" and in "To a louse". It is strange to find a sentimental writer satirical and humorous for satire and humor kill sensibility, but all these were strong in Burns. This is the reason Burns is a contradiction to himself. He has the strongest hold upon the present

thru his songs. Even the feelings of the American people have not developed beyond the enjoyment of "Afton Waters", "Auld Lang Syne" and "The Blue Bells of Scotland".

Scotland produced two other poets who followed in the footsteps of Burns- James Hogg (1770-1835) and Thomas Campbell (1777-1844). The sensibility of the highland shepherd, Hogg, was caused mostly by his uncontrolled enthusiasm. On account of his father's death, while he was yet a boy, he was permitted to remain at school only six months but he read all the books he could find while he was tending his sheep. His verses were simple, showing his lack of education but they were pleasing to the highlanders when he was a shepherd and later they were read with interest by all Scotland. He was known in the forests as 'Jamie the Poeter'. His poetic patriotism almost equalled that of Burns. He wrote a poem upon the threatened invasion of Corsican Callan in eighteen hundred.. The following lines taken from it show his almost childish enthusiasm-

"I laugh when I think how we'd gall him
Wi' bullet, wi' steel, an wi' stane;
Wi' rocks of the Nevis and Garny
We'd rattle him off frae the shore,
Or lull him asleep in a cairny
An' sing him -"Lochaber no more!"

In eighteen hundred and thirty two, while in Edinburg to sell

sheep, he had a volume of his ballads published; he spent the proceeds in unprofitable farming and then decided to go to Edinburg to make his living with his pen. "The Queen's Wake" established his reputation as a poet. He is a master of the ballad- his love songs equal his patriotic poems in simple earnestness. His love poem "When the Kye Come Hame" describes a shepherd with endearing fondness for his lassie and shows how preferable is their simple life to that of the court,

"Then since all nature joins
In this love without alloy,
O, who would prove a traitor
To nature's dearest joy?
Or who would choose a crown,
With its perils and its fame,
And miss his bonny lassie
When the kye come hame?"

"The Queen's Wake " is narrative and in spirit and style reminds one strongly of "Horatius at the Bridge". Hogg did not have the resentment against the upper classes that Burns had; he related with great joy how the Hamiltons came to be of the royal lineage. Hogg's sentiment of patriotism and love for the bonny lassie finds a warm place in the heart of the Scottish people.

Thomas Campbell (1777-1844) was almost as studious as White and was also a prize student at college. On the eve of the new century (1799) he published his poem, "Pleasures of Hope". The spirit of hope exceeds the spirit of melancholy in Campbell. This paragraph of the poem expresses his desired attitude of mind,

"Congenial Hope! thou passion-kindling power,
How bright, how strong, in youth's untroubled hour!
On yon proud height, with genius hand in hand
I see thee light and wave the golden wand.
Go, child of heaven! thy winged words proclaim
'Tis thine to search the boundless fields of fame."

This poem is rather an appeal for hope to reign in the world than a rejoicing over the fact that it already reigns. He would like for his feelings to be pleasant always but the dark pictures, which destroy hope, will come sometimes, as when he laments over how many people must die to make a Caesar, great. Campbell appeals to our emotion of horror in his description of Earl March looking upon his dying child; and also in Hohenlinden he attempts to give the reader a chill by his picture of the death of the soldiers-

"But redder yet that light shall glow
On Linden's hills of tained^t snow;
And bloodier yet the torrent flow
Of Iser, rolling rapidly."

Campbell also took an interest in nature; he wrote several poems on such subjects as "To the Evening Star", "The Beech Tree's Petition", "Ode to Winter" and "Song to the Evening-Star". He almost makes one home-sick in "The Soldier's Dream" when he relates how pleased the soldier is when he thinks he has returned home. Campbell's emotions are highly cultivated.

The lives of Wordsworth (1770-1850) and Burns overlap considerably and they are both classed as nature poets, but their conceptions of nature are somewhat different. Burns did not go beyond the appearance; Wordsworth takes a step beyond all former students of the external world, but he did not definitely understand his own position as he says in his lines "Written in Early Spring",

"And 'tis my faith that every flower
Enjoys the air it breaths.

And I must think do how I can,
That there was pleasure there."

Wordsworth was inspired with the feeling that there was something in nature more than the visible substance. This feeling was more clearly understood and explained by the transcendentalists, who believed that nature was the in-

carnation of the mind of God; a beautiful scene was the material representation of the Creator's idea of beauty. Wordsworth did not have so clear a comprehension; he knew that there was something that nature represented, but not having an exact idea of what it was he revelled in the mystery. Wordsworth's sensibility was different from his predecessors; he was sentimental but not emotional. He lived a calm, happy home life, little disturbed by his surrounding circumstances, except when for a short time he threatened to take part in the French Revolution. Wordsworth enjoyed nature as much as he did friends, when he was young.

"The sounding cataract
Haunted me like a passion; the tall rock,
The mountain, and the deep and gloomy wood,
Their colors and their forms were then to me
An appetite, a feeling and a love
That had no need of a remoter charm
By thought supplied, nor any interest
Unborrowed from the eye."

As Wordsworth grew older he liked nature no less but in a different manner. A feeling of sadness came to him, like at the separation of old friends, when he realized that he could not always live in nature as he had done when a child.

Wordsworth was a poet for common things; one of his maxims was to choose simple subjects, but he goes beyond this rule in his "Intimations of Immortality", which is philosophical. Perhaps philosophical subjects are simple if they were understood. However Wordsworth's field was in the natural world as Coleridge's was in the supernatural.

Love affairs did not protrude perceptibly into Wordsworth's life, perhaps because of his great love for his sister Dorothy. He has several poems which exhibit his admiration for girls - "She was a Phantom of Delight", "Lucy Gray" and "To the Highland Girl of Inversneyde". In contrasting Wordsworth to Cowper, White, Sterne, Shenstone, Bloomfield, Crabbe and Mrs. Hemans there was no weak mind or sickly body, no sensual love, no life of debauchery to throw him into remorse or repentance, no shallow character that knew nothing deeper than feelings, but a calm spirit admiring nature with a wholesome mind. These other writers had some ailment or were overcome by external circumstances. These facts seem to lead to the conclusion that the only essential quality for a sentimentalist is a weak character and the surrounding conditions soon have their own way in him. Wordsworth is the last great poet that the sentimentalists can strictly claim. Altho sentimentality is evident in the early writers of the nineteenth century, it is not a predominant mood and is merged in other characteristics.

James Montgomery (1771-1854) had his early poetical hopes blighted by the cutting criticism written by Jeffrey in the Edinburg Review -"We took compassion on Mr. Montgomery on his first appearance; conceiving him to be some slender youth, intoxicated with weak tea, and the praises of sentimental Ensigns and tempted in that situation, to commit a feeble outrage on the public, of which the recollection would be sufficient punishment." The censure of this entire article was too much for Montgomery's sensitive nature; for several years afterward he wrote nothing, and never again with the same freedom as at first. He is the most noted religious writer since Cowper. He expresses his religious feelings fluently. His poem on "Prayer" has become familiar to all lovers of poetry; it opens with these lines,

"Prayer is the soul's sincere desire
Uttered or unexpressed
The motion of a hidden fire
That trembles in the breast."

Montgomery has no dramatic or narrative power but he can express a person's feeling well and it is ^{his} short lyrical poems that are used most. The binding ties of friendship are found in "Friends"; the common subjects of "Home" and "A Mother's Love" he again makes interesting. In "To a Daisy"

he makes us see the humility which this little flower has as it looks upon its more conspicuous neighbors. He has good descriptive passages but he is accused of taking them from books instead of from nature. His sense of beauty is found in "Night On the Alps".

"Come, golden evening in the west
Enthroned the storm-dispelling sun,
And let the triple rainbow rest
O'er all the mountain tops:-

'Tis done."

The deluge ceases, bold and bright
The rainbow shoots from hill to hill
Down sinks the sun; on presses night;
Mont Blanc is lovely still."

His verses on "The Grave" are an improvement in that upon the former sentimentalists. He is not so materialistic as they and has a clear hope for the future.

"The soul, of origin divine,
God's glorious image, freed from clay,
In heaven's eternal sphere shall shine
A star of day!"

Over a hundred of his songs are said to be still in use. Devout christians sing them with pleasure.

CHAPTER V

ROMANTICISM AND SENTIMENTALITY

The age of Pope is considered as extending from seventeen hundred to seventeen hundred and forty five, the age of Dr. Johnson from seventeen hundred and forty five to seventeen hundred and eighty four. From seventeen hundred and eighty four until eighteen hundred sentimentality rose to its greatest height. The sentimental movement more nearly coincides with the romantic than with any other. Romanticism became evident toward the beginning of the century and after a gradual development held a noticeable place during the sentimental period, but it showed its brightest colors in the early part of the nineteenth century. Henry H. Beers said in "A History of Romanticism in the Eighteenth Century", that romanticism was a fad and sensibility a natural development. It is strange that he would write two volumes on a fad and give it as important a place as he does in English literature. The romantic style appears to have had several fundamental causes; it is a marked step of advancement from the formal to the interesting, from the egotistical to the inquisitive, from the dignified to the simple, from the known to the unknown.

Romanticism deals with material and subject matter, sensibility with the mood of literature. Lane Cooper said in addressing The Classical Association at Barnard College, "Sensibility has, in this form or that, existed and poisoned English poetry at all times since the sixteenth century. But for its fellow vice, vagueness, this is otherwise. For vagueness there has indeed been no time so fertile as the first forty years of the nineteenth century." Vagueness is one of the crimes the romanticists are accused of committing; the cause of this was that the romanticists, entering upon a new field of literature were not always sure of their ground and consequently could not express themselves clearly. Another reason was that when a writer did know his business and have his thought clearly in mind himself, readers could not understand him because they were still looking ^{thru} the glasses of the school of Pope or the sentimental period. In regard to vagueness sentimental writings stand in direct opposition to the romantic, because the former are always simple. They could not be otherwise for they are only concerned with the things of the senses and would cease to be sentimental if they entered upon deep thought. Romanticists also ventured to write upon subjects which mankind has never been able to explain.

The sentimentalist is inclined to choose subjects from his home country and in his own time; the romanticist locates his story in as strange a place as possible and any time is more suitable to him than the homely present. The former either overpraises his present situation as being 'perfectly lovely' or complains of his woes with no hope to overcome them; but when both of these elements are found in the same writing, the sentimental gives way to the romantic in regard to time and place and exercises itself only in the mood. In "The Mysteries of Udolpho" the location is foreign and the time is remote but the sentimental still is evident in the disposition of the characters; regardless of the horrible circumstances, encountered by the heroine, which in real life would have added strength to a character, she continues to weep, faint and lament. At the end of the story she is unscarred by her misfortunes and begins a life of happiness with her recovered lover. This story also illustrates the sentimentalist's lack of ability to develop characters; they have little conception of cause and effect and bring about the different events of their story arbitrarily. The first sentimental novels, such as those of Richardson and Steele, were not Romantic but in the latter part of the eighteenth century

the two characteristics are commonly found in the same writings.

The revival of the Gothic style by Horace Walpole was certainly a fad. The grotesque, the monstrous and hideous elements are its typical signs. These three movements were interwoven. The Gothic element was never found alone but always in combination with the sentimental or romantic.

Southey (1774-1843), Wordsworth, Coleridge and Scott lived about thirty years in the eighteenth century but are classed in the nineteenth century because of the spirit of their work. These together with the passionate group, Byron, Shelley and Keats form a connecting link between the eighteenth century sentimentalism and nineteenth century realism. In the writings of these men romanticism reached its climax. Southey has a practical mind. His emotionalism consists in his enthusiasm for heroic action. He is best known by his prose writings; however he wrote many short poems, some of which are good. In "Lord William" (1798) he appeals vigorously to the reader's sympathy when he describes how Lord William caused Edmund to be drowned.

"But never could Lord William dare
To gaze on Severn's stream;
In every wind that swept its wave
He heard young Edmund's scream!"

Coleridge (1772-1834) was a better Journalist, lecturer and philosopher than poet. He is exceedingly romantic in his presentation of weird scenes. In his poems the main action takes place in the world of spirits; in "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner" and in "Christabel" the conflicting forces are good and evil spirits or thots. His appeal is to the moral judgement and not to the emotions except in a few cases where he delights to make our flesh creep by his ghastly pictures. The evil character of Geraldine , at times, assumes its natural appearance of a snake.

"A snake's small eye blinks dull and shy,
And the lady's they shrunk in her head,
Each shrunk up to a serpent's eye,
And with somewhat of malice, and more of dread
At Christabel she looked askance!
One moment- and the sight was fled!
But Christabel in dizzy trance,
Stumbling on the unsteady ground-
Shuddered aloud with a hissing sound."

Percy Bysshe Shelley (1792-1822) was only slightly ^{sentimental}. He passed beyond Wordsworth's state of uncertainty in regard to nature and joyously admired the uncontrolled strength represented by Mont Blanc and the free happy spirit of the skylark. Shelley's voice was the personification of freedom. In such poems as "Songs to the Men of England" touches

of sentimentalism are seen; he complains that man, who ought to be free, is bound. His faith in man's future perfection and freedom never changed but he lacked patience to grant time for this to be accomplished. Shelley was ahead of his time; even critics today will not believe his doctrine "that evil resides wholly in things external and not in the will of man." Such poems as "To the Night", "The Flight of Love" and "Stanzas Written in Dejection Near Naples" show his sensitive feelings.

"I could lie down like a tired child,
And weep away the life of care
Which I have borne, and yet must bear,-
Till death like sleep might steal on me,
And I might feel in the warm air
My cheek grow cold, and hear the sea
Breathe o'er my dying brain its last monotony."

There was nothing pretended about Shelley's feelings; they were perfectly sincere.

The romanticism of John Keats (1795-1821) and Shelley was not the same as that charming care-free romanticism of Scott, which was produced for entertainment only; but in the aspiring Shelley and in the pugnacious Keats was born the spirit of the French Revolution, softened by sentimentalism. Literature is history in a different dress. Keats has less control over his feelings than Shelley. He express-

es some sentimental melancholy in "Isabella" where the maiden found her dead lover.

"And all around each eye's sepulchral cell
Pointed each fringed lash; the smeared loam
With tears, as chilly as a dripping well,
She drenched away;-and still she combed and kept
Sighing all day- and still she kissed and wept."

Keats was a resurrected Greek, taking beauty to its highest summit and declaring that the good is the beautiful.

The sentimental romanticism of Keats was changed into passion in Byron (1788-1824). The sentimentalists delighted in giving way to their feelings, and seeking sympathy by telling others of their emotions. Sympathy was the last thing in the world that Byron wanted; he resented it. He did not want other people to know his feelings. Altho there are indications that he grieved at his mother's death, as soon as the corpse was taken from the house he engaged in a boxing match, evidently because he was being watched and wanted to conceal his feelings. He pretended as if circumstances could not affect him but he was by no means master of his feelings. Fervent admiration is expressed in "And Thou Art Dead, As Young As Fair",

" I will not ask where thou liest low,
Nor gaze upon the spot;
There flowers or weeds at will may grow,

So I behold them not:
It is enough for me to prove
That what I loved, and long must love,
Like common earth can rot;
To me there needs no stone to tell,
'Tis nothing that I loved so well."

Byron had nothing of the graveyard mania in him; he did not like to visit graves or think of a friend as a decayed corpse. His "Apostrophe to the Ocean" shows his love for nature.

The sentimental mood as a movement in literature was overcome by this group of romantic writers, but it still continued to exist in lesser quantities . It is even found to some extent in Tennyson, as in the first part of "In Memoriam" and in "Enoch Arden". Even to the present time we find shallow-minded writers who are extremely sentimental.

Mrs. Hemans (1793- 1835), formerly Felicia Dorothea Browne, lived after her time. Her writings are all sentimental; the sorrows of her life probably had some effect upon them. After she had been married nine years her husband deserted her, stating that his health required his residence in southern Europe. Mrs. Hemans was well educated, cultured and religious, tho in no manner demonstrative about it. She never showed any resentment publicly against her husband's actions and the trouble between them was

never discovered. Her writings are more sentimental than her life ; she was always quiet and reserved. Scott and Wordsworth admired her style- her diction was beautiful and harmonious. "The Forest Sanctuary" was her favorite poem. The poem describes the mental conflicts as well as the outward suffering, of a Spaniard, who flying from the religious persecutions of his own country in sixteen hundred, takes refuge , with his child, in North American forests. His home-sick heart cries out,

"Yet art thou lovely! Song is on thy hills-
O sweet and mournful melodies of Spain,
That lulled my boyhood, how you memory thrills
The exile's heart with sudden- waking pain!-
And from the sunny vales the shepherd's strain
Floats out and fills the solitary place

With the old tuneful names of Spain's heroic race."
Disappointment was the theme uppermost in her mind. The following lines are from "Farewell".

"When the sad parting word we hear,
That seems of past delight to tell;
Who then without a sacred tear can say farewell?
And are we ever doomed to mourn,
That e'en our joys may lead to pain?
Alas the rose without a thorn

We seek in vain."

Mrs. Hemans does not describe nature simply for the beauty in itself but to give setting to her poems. She develops the thought that nature should comfort and elevate the feelings, in "The Wanderer and the Night Flowers".

"Call it not wasted, the scent we lend
To the breeze, when no step is nigh;
Oh, thus forever the earth should send
Her grateful breath on high!

Mrs. Hemans would have been more popular if she had written twenty five years before she did. Her faithfulness and love for her children are portrayed in her poem "Look on Me With Thy Cloudless Eyes."

L. E. Landon (1802-1838), afterwards Mrs. Maclean, was also late with her poetry. She wrote poetry for the papers for some time, simply signing her initials, L. E. L., so that she might not be known, because women were not very popular as writers at that time. Her sentimental verses caused much excitement, especially among the young gentlemen college students. The students were all the more pleased when they found that a lady had produced the subjects of their adoration. She was a specialist on melancholy love verses such as those in her poem "Can You Forget Me?"

"To well I know the idleness of asking,
The misery of why I am forgot?
The happy hours that I have passed while kneeling
Half slave, half child, to gaze upon thy face.
- But what to thee this passionate appealing
Let my heart break, - it is a common case,
You have forgotten me!"

A great mind will pass thru and beyond the manners of its
time; a lesser mind will follow a style that is already
passed.

CHAPTER VI

REACTION AND REALISM

Sentimentality had no more than reached its flourishing stage than reaction set in. The first opposition occurred in the drama. Goldsmith was certain of his calling - it was to break up those overwrought feelings and make men laugh. He expresses his purpose clearly in one of his prologues and makes an almost sympathetic appeal to his audience to break away from their frivolous crying and enjoy his comedy. Goldsmith lived up to his teaching; he met all the misfortunes of his own life, which were not a few, with good humor and turned disasters into benefits. His dramas, "The Good-natured Man" (1768) and "She Stoops to Conquer" (1773) began to have his desired effect. The latter play shows the author's effort to release himself from the former style of drama and in doing so he has exaggerated the realities of life in some scenes; but his optimism never fails - lost fortunes are found and people who were thought to be dead, are found to be alive. When humor awakened, sentimentality began to disappear. When the sentimentalist saw himself weeping on the stage in a satire, he realized how ridiculously he had been acting.

Sheridan had a common purpose with Goldsmith but did not equal him as a reformer. Sheridan reproduced the surface of life, for which his own life gave him abundant material. Before he was of age he assisted Miss Linley, the great singer, to escape from Matthews and married her himself; he fought two duels with Matthews. Sheridan did not have a college education but had studied oratory with his father. While living at Bath, which was at that time one of the most popular social centers in England, he gained valuable material for his later writings. His play, "The School for Scandal" set forth the artificiality of social life and the results of gossip. The burlesque, "The Critic", (1779) was another step away from sentimentalism. Sheridan turned his satirical tongue in many different directions and "The Rivals" (1775) announced his separation from sentimentalism.

M. G. Lewis' novel, "The Monk", (1795) is a cutting satire on sensuous love affairs and shows the base results of following animal instincts. It is a question whether satire does as much good as is sometimes thought because it is better to reform people by turning their attention to the opposite of their faults -to the perfect- than to keep their weaknesses fresh in their minds by reproducing them

even in satire.

Jane Austen, of limited education and experience in life, is a master in the field in which she chose to work. She looked upon the thrilling events of the sentimentalist and romanticist with indifference, because to her they were far removed from the realities of life; she knew nothing beyond her small village, with its simple social duties. The most startling incident of which she could conceive was the occurrence of a marriage or the return of her brothers from the navy. This simple life, represented in her novel, "Sense and Sensibility", (1811) forms a humorous contrast to the artificial social life, popular among the upper classes.

Miss Austen is realistic in her style; in her master piece, "Pride and Prejudice" she proves that the true production of characters excels the gaudy colors of exaggerations.

Many parodies have been written by minor writers. George Crabbe's "Inebriety" ridicules the style of Pope; Byron's "To Mr. Murray" imitates Cowper. Shelley and John H. Reynolds produced cruel imitations of Wordsworth's "Peter Bell". Dryden's tragedies were ridiculed in Buckingham's "Rehearsal". C. S. Caverley was the greatest parodist in the Victorian Age. The following lines are taken from his poem on "Beer."

"To those old^{days} which poets say were golden-
Perhaps they laid the gilding on themselves;
And if they did, I'm all the more beholden
To those brown dwellers in my dusty shelves.

Yet do I think their theory was pleasant;

When no one smoked cigars, nor gave at-homes."

The satires were against anything artificial or hypocritical. It was discovered that the true representation of life was more interesting than the exaggerated.

As nineteenth century realism appears, the question presents itself, Is the age of sensibility passed? Critics say that it has and that realism now holds its place. There are only a few thousand sentimental novels published every year and only a great many thousand people, who attend the moving picture shows every day. Many people spend more time reading light novels and attending emotional shows than they spend in sleeping. Mr. Herbert Bates says, in his notes on Ruskin's "Sesame and Lilies", "Sensational literature is the crude stimulant necessary to rouse the dull, torpid senses of the vulgar. Had they more true sensation they could appreciate more refined pleasure. The finer the development of eye, ear, touch, taste and spirit, the greater the development of man."

The thoughtful person might look with discouragement upon the present literary condition and at first sight it seems as tho it had never been worse because so many people have never amused themselves with trashy writings as today; but it must also be considered that a century ago not many common people amused themselves with any kind of literature . The twentieth century has brot a great opportunity to the laborer in giving him time to cultivate his mind; he could not be expected to start by studying Dante or Browning. As the small boy hides himself, to keep from being discovered, while reading a forbidden detective story, and laughs about it in later life, when he is enjoying Thackeray, so the people will develop out of their moving picture mania. Statistics show that there is a decrease in the attendance, from that of last year and the moving picture machine is finding its proper place in the schools and as an assistance to lecturers. The light literature will cease to be produced when there is no more demand for it.

The name given to a literary period is taken from the productions of our great writers and not from the tendencies of the mass of people. This is truly the age of realism. The realism of the nineteenth century is a return to nature- a reaction after the exaggerations of

romanticism and sentimentalism. The feelings are still there and are more sincere because they are under control; the imagination is still there but it bounded by reason. The realists form a strong contrast to the wavering sentimentalists- they are opposite in disposition. The latter were fearful because they anticipated trouble; the former fear nothing because they have confidence in life. Dickens and Carlyle had struggles with the ills of life but they won the victory.

Amateurs, in trying to produce a piece of literature in the realistic style, have given it the reputation of being uninteresting. They have considered realism to mean monotonous because it must present life as it really is; but life has too many incidents and covers too much time to have any portion of ^{it} reproduced in literature exactly as it ; or if it were possible, what would be the benefit? You might just as well look at life itself. Realism does not mean what amateurs have tried to make it appear; neither is it the pure imitation of nature as some better writers have thot. Poe worked hard to find words containing vowel sounds, that would represent the feeling, which he was trying to produce. Tennyson made the rhythm of his verses correspond to the sound of a brooklet, in describing a brooklet. Hiram M. Stanley

says," Who seeks in art merely an illusion of reality, is essentially vulgar in that he degrades art to an apish foolery. A picture so realistic that we take it for the reality is no more fine art than a mirror so clear that we crash into it by mistake. A higher form of realism, is that which aims not at a perfect mimicry of reality but at a perfect record." After all, the reality of anything is not its appearance; it is behind the appearance; it is what the outward form represents. Thus the exact imitation of the material appearance may be far from the reality. Our ideas of the beautiful change. In the end only the truth will be beautiful and all artificial means of describing the truth - the reality- will be dropped. An engine, with all its parts working harmoniously together is beautiful to the engineer - far more beautiful to him than Tennyson's poem on the brook. To the mathematician, a long problem in Calculus is beautiful because of its absolute harmony to the laws of mathematics. This scientific age is demanding the truth in literature as well as in science, religion and philosophy and it is caring less for the artificial decorations which writers have been inclined to use upon it. Science has discovered that reality is beautiful and interesting in itself. Stanley also said that a novelist should not tell us a

Story to amuse us or to appeal to our feelings but to cause us to reflect and understand the deeper meaning of events.

It is evident, that altho the age of sensibility is passed, there are still many traces of it existing at the present time. As man develops he rises above his sensitive nature. Among the great nineteenth century writers, Emerson and Browning stand forth as seekers for the reality. Browning expresses the faith and optimism of the age in his drama "Pippa Passes".

"God's in his heaven-

All's right with the world!"

The abstract ideas which Emerson explained in prose, Browning has presented to us in dramatic verse. Sentimentalism served its day but in the brighter day of Browning we have no more use for it.

APPENDIX

Some words of common occurrence in sentimental verse.

abandon
abhor
abyss
aching
affectionate
affection
agitation
agony
alone
amorous
animation
anxious
anxiety
ardent
ardor
awe
awful
awearry

barren
bashful
benighted
benumb
bleeding
bitter
blight
bliss
blood
bloody
bluely
blush
breaking
bonds
burial
burn
burden

care
caress
charm
cheer

chill
churchyard
cloud
compassion
complaint
contemplation
confused
cruel
cry
crush

dainty
dark
darkest
darling
darkness
dead
deadly
dear
death
deathbed
death-storm
death-song
decay
defile
dejected
delicate
delicious
delighted
departed
deplore
despair
desert
desolution
devout
die
dim
dirge
disappointed
dismay
dismal
doom

doleful
dread
dreadful
drear
dreary
dream
dreamy
dull
dungeon
dying

eager
eagerness
elated
emotion
enchantress
enchancing
endless
endear
endearment
enthrall
entrancing
enjoyment
evil
exile
exquisite

fade
faint
faintly
famished
fancy
farewell
favorite
fear
fearful
flame
feeling
flowery
flush
fluster
fond
fondly
fondle
forsake
frail
frenzy
frantic

friendless
full
funeral

gaily
gentle
ghost
gloom
grave
grief
groan
gulf
gush

haggard
hapless
happiness
haunts
heartily
heart-broken
heartless
hope
heyday
hollow
home-sick
humble
hush
hysterical

impassioned
impatience
impatient
infatuate
injured
jealous
joy
joyless

kiss
knell

lament
lamentation
languish
lan guid
lavish
lone
lonely

lonesome
lost
love
lover
lovable
lovely

meditation
meek
melancholy
memory
mercy
mild
misfortune
moan
modest
monstrous
moody
moon
moonlight
midnight
morose
morbid
mourn
mournful
murmur
muse
moan
mysterious
mystery

night
night-fires
night-steed
night-wind

oppressor
out-cast

pale
pang
parting
passion
passioned- crazed
pathos

penitent
pensive
penitence
persecution
pine
plaint
plaintive
pity
ponder
poor
precious

rage
rash
rapture
rave
regret
repine
repent
resigned
restless
roam
romantic
ruin

sad
sense
sensibility
sensation
sensational
sentiment
sensitive
sentimental
sentual
sensuous
severed
shade
shattered
shroud
shadowy
sickbed
sickly
sickenning
sigh
silent

sink
slaughter
smile
soft
soften
solemn
solitary
solitude
soothe
sorrow
still
stifle
suffer
suffering
sullen
sweet
storm
sympathy
suppliant

tear
teardrop
tearful
tender
terrific
terrify
thrill
timid
timorous
tired
tomb
toll
tremble
tremulous
trouble
troubled

unfeeling
unfortunate
ungenerous
unpitied
wander
wailing
waning
way-worn

weary
weak
wearisome
wreck
weep
wild
withered
wilderness
woe
wounded
writhe
wretched
wringing

yield
yearn

zeal

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